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CONTACT: MARA LEE

(202) 225-7163

Congresswoman Matsui Continues to Oppose GOP Efforts to Gut Clean Air Standards
Votes Against H.R. 2681

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) voted against the so-called “Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act” (H.R. 2681) in a continued effort to stop Republican attacks on the Clean Air Act. H.R. 2681 would nullify Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules that require reductions in emissions of toxic air pollutants – including mercury – from cement plants, putting both the environment and public health at risk.

H.R. 2681 is one in a series of bills that House Republicans have brought to the floor that would undermine the Clean Air Act and the core mission of the EPA to protect the environment and public health. To make it worse, these type of bills are being considered almost every week on the House floor, even while House Republicans refuse to consider or debate jobs legislation.

“It is truly disappointing that even though everyone agrees that Congress’ number one priority must be getting America back to work, Republicans continue to attack the Clean Air Act instead of bringing a jobs package to the floor. This ill-conceived strategy only puts the health of Americans at risk– it will not spur job growth,” stated Congresswoman Matsui.

Studies have shown that implementing Clean Air Act regulations does not result in major financial burdens being placed on utility companies and are not the reason for lay-offs in targeted industries. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that businesses cited these regulations as causing only 0.2 percent of layoffs in 2010.

In fact, the EPA standards – if upheld– would help save Americans from considerable health and financial hardship. In September, Environment California released a report showing Sacramento as the 10th smoggiest metropolitan city in the nation, which only reiterates the need to maintain strong clean air standards.

“Not only do Clean Air Act standards curb air pollution and save lives, but they also save Americans billions of dollars in emergency room visits and increased health care costs,” Matsui added. “I will continue to urge my colleagues to focus their efforts on job creation. Undermining public health and environmental standards will not provide the jobs that Sacramento families need – and the long-term effects of such short-sighted policies such as H.R. 2681 would be disastrous for families all across America.”

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